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## FRAME'S COMMENTARY ON THESSALONIANS

This is a notable addition to the "International Critical Commentary" series,<sup>1</sup> and Professor Frame is heartily to be congratulated on the completion of a work which has involved so much careful and conscientious research. No one can dip even casually into its pages without realizing that their author is thoroughly at home in all the literature that has grown up from these epistles, and also that he has brought an independent and well-balanced judgment to bear upon the many problems of interpretation which they suggest. The style and arrangement of the *Commentary* as a whole are admirable. The writer never leaves his readers in any doubt as to his meaning, and by a skilful use of different type in the body of the page, he has made it possible for the general reader to omit the more technical passages, while the student finds all the varied points in which he is interested brought before him in what is practically a continuous narrative, undisturbed by a single footnote.

The Introduction deals with the usual subjects, the founding of the church at Thessalonica, and the special circumstances in its history which led to the writing of the two epistles. Both are accepted as genuine writings of Paul in accordance with the growing trend of modern scholarship, the writer finding nothing in the second epistle which presents an insuperable objection to the traditional view, supported, as it can be, on so many different grounds. Harnack's ingenious hypothesis that there were two churches in Thessalonica, one of Gentiles, and the other of Jews, and that I Thessalonians was addressed to the former and II Thessalonians to the latter, is set aside mainly on the ground that the first letter betrays no knowledge of the existence of more than one Christian assembly at Thessalonica. As regards date, with the aid of the Delphic inscription, to which Deissmann (Paulus, pp. 159 ff.) has recently drawn attention, which shows that Gallio entered on office in Corinth in midsummer 51, the writing of I Thessalonians is fixed in the spring of 50, as it is known that Paul had already been in Corinth eighteen months when the proconsul arrived, and that the epistle was in all probability dispatched early in the apostle's stay (cf. 3:6). The second epistle would be written a few weeks later, the shortness of the interval, as in the case of Colossians and Ephesians, helping to explain the great

<sup>1</sup> *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St. Paul to the Thessalonians*. In the "International Critical Commentary." By James Everett Frame, Professor of Biblical Theology, Union Theological Seminary. New York: Scribner, 1912. ix+326 pages.

similarity of language between the epistles. The textual problems raised by the Thessalonian epistles are not, as a rule, of great importance; but all variants bearing on questions of exegesis are carefully discussed in the body of the *Commentary*, and a section of the Introduction contains a useful list of the principal manuscripts and versions, from which our knowledge of these variants is derived.

It is, however, in the lexical field that the outstanding merits of Professor Frame's volume will be most readily recognized. Detailed illustration is impossible within the limits of a review such as this, but one or two points may be noted. In I Thess. 2:3 Professor Frame, following Bishop Lightfoot, understands ἀκαθαρσία in the sense of "impurity." With this view the present writer was previously in agreement, but now, notwithstanding the difficulty of finding adequate parallels for the usage, it seems to him that the thought of "Covetousness," "self-interest," is alone really applicable in the context. The reading of νήπιοι, instead of the easier ἡπιοι, in vs. 7 of the same chapter is rightly maintained, and the sense it conveys might have been further brought out by the mention of Rutherford's happy, if somewhat free, rendering: "We carried ourselves among you with a childish simplicity, as a mother becomes a child again when she fondles her children." Similarly in the following verse, some notice might have been taken of Professor J. H. Moulton's derivation of the difficult word δμείρομαι from the lost *smēr*, "to remember," with a prepositional element as in ὀδύρομαι. In 3:8 it is, I think, at least doubtful whether we are entitled to emphasize στήκετε as equal to "stand fast." Usage seems rather to point to its being simply a late form with the ordinary meaning "stand." In that *crux*, 4:4, Professor Frame throws out the interesting suggestion that εἰδέναι is to be translated "regard," "appreciate the worth of," as in 5:12. And in this latter passage the use of προϊστασθαι in the LXX and papyri is rightly appealed to as pointing to a general supervision and management of the external affairs of the congregation, rather than that spiritual guidance to which it is sometimes narrowed.

The large use of contemporary linguistic evidence, especially as drawn from vernacular sources, is a distinguishing feature of the whole *Commentary* and is nowhere more in place than just in these epistles which in their outward form and phraseology suggest so many interesting parallels with the ordinary letters of the day. Indeed if only on this ground, as representing Paul's more "normal" mode of writing, the epistles to the Thessalonians are deserving of the most careful study. And I can only add that Professor Frame's rich and suggestive edition is

bound to give a powerful stimulus to this study, as well as to furnish a most valuable aid towards carrying it out.

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### SPITTA'S SYNOPTIC GRUNDSCHRIFT

Three years ago Spitta published the results of his study on the Fourth Gospel, restoring what he thought to be the original foundation document which lay behind that gospel in its present form. He has now done a similar piece of work upon the Synoptics<sup>1</sup>, in which he departs very widely from current opinion. He rejects the almost universally accepted view that Mark is the source of synoptic narrative for both Matthew and Luke, and recovers from Luke a document which is not only much older than our Mark but presents a much more reliable form of tradition. Its content is to be found, with some slight change of wording, in Luke 3:1-4, 7-38; 4:1-22, 24, 31-44; 5:12-27, 29-39; 6:1-17, 20-49; 7:1, 16-22, 24-35; 8:1-10, 12-28, 30-35, 37-56; 9:1-11, 18-21, 23-26, 28-56; 18:15-31, 34-43; 19:36-44, 47 f.; 20:1-36, 39-47; 21:1-9, 12-15, 18-24, 10 f., 25 f., 28-33, 37 f.; 22:1-6, 14-18, 21 f., 28-40, 47, 51-63, 65-69; 23:1-3, 14, 18-24, 26-36, 38, 44-48, 50-56; 24:1, 3, 9, 36-39, 41-44, 48, 50-53. The criteria for determining the originality of this material are the connection, the color, and the content, which in Luke are found to be more primitive and natural than in any other gospel. Proceeding along this line, the material is examined section by section in great detail.

This *Grundschrift* is dated in the forties, and is earlier than any of Paul's epistles and contains the tradition of eyewitnesses. As such it is much more reliable than Mark. Hence the customary account of Jesus' life as given by the critical school must be abandoned at several points. For example, Jesus began his public ministry in Judea while John was still working. Then followed a period of work in Galilee after which Jesus returned to Judea. Here it was that he chose the Twelve and preached the sermon which caused a rumor to spread through Judea that a great prophet had arisen in Israel. Then he returned to Galilee, visited the north country, and came again to Judea by way of Samaria. He did not live to eat the Passover but his last meal with the disciples was on the previous evening.

It is impossible in a brief review to discuss the particulars of the

<sup>1</sup> *Die synoptische Grundschrift in ihrer Ueberlieferung durch das Lukasevangelium.* Von Friedrich Spitta. Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1912. xlviii+512 pages. M. 15.